771 religion, rudiments of which have survived throughout the Christian era up to the present time, are animism and a close relationship
776 with the dead. Almost every object and power in nature has its protective spirits or fairies (haldjas), which are considered a later development under Gothic influence of the earlier native soul conception (soul of the forest, water, etc.). The best known of the fairies are the forest fairies (beautiful young girls) and the water spirit (usually a grey old man). Mermaids, distinctly of German origin, often occur in folk tales. Household spirits have probably developed from an earlier belief in the protective power of deceased ancestors and in some later developments they are simply ill-natured ghosts. Tales of wind fairies are popular also, but fire seemingly has been less important. At one time

776 thunder was an object of worship, the personification of thunder being an arrow-shooting old man. The god of heaven and thunder was probably Taara, like Thor of the Scandinavians, but from this one cannot conclude that the old religion of the Estonians was monotheistic.

769 The Ancient Estonians believed that life would continue after death the same as an earth. For this reason they used to put in the graves food and other useful items. The Estonians had no fear of the dead. They would often go to the burial ground to speak to their dead relatives and to learn their advice. In November there was the so-called "time of the souls," when it was believed that the dead would come to visit their relatives and they would feast together.

775 Presumably under the influence of Christianity, some of the dead, who had been sorcerers,

754 sicknesses. Later on, during the long-time
538 slavery under German barons, the nõid became a demon who could bring trouble to the more fortunate people and good fortune to the poor; he could fly through the air or turn into a werewolf. Such fortune-bringing man-made demons have been very popular in Estonian folklore.

538 Tales of giants (hiid) originated in the last
[17] phase of the Iron Age, the Viking era, when con-
776 tacts with the Scandinavians were close. Scandinavian influence in tales of giants has been traced also in northern Russia.

The folk tales of Saaremaa tell of a giant Suur-Toll 'Big Toll' his wife Piret, and their son Noor-Tõll 'Young Tõll.'

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, K. Ganader's Mythologia fennica appeared in German translation and helped to create a

1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

538 pantheon of gods and semigods, mostly borrowed,
776 and partly created by Estonian writers, e. g., Fählmann. The most popular figures of this literary pseudomythology are: Vanemuine (Finnish Väinämöinen): Ilmarine, the black-smith with supernatural creative powers (Finnish Ilmarinen); Lämmeküne, a young hero (Finnish Lemminkäinen); Pikker, the god of thunder; Tuuslar, an ill-natured supernatural being; Uku, a supergod, also borrowed from Finnish mythology; and Vanaisa (Grandfather), the god in heaven.

779 Written Literature. In the period from 1535 to 1780 written literature consisted mostly of religious works written by the local German clergy. Catechisms, prayer books, hymnals, the New Testament (1715, 1886) and the whole Bible (1739)

1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

814 coinages and other new words used in his translations.

538 A. H. Tammsaare (1878-1940) started as a naturalist with stories of rural life at the beginning of the present century, and continued as a Neo-Romanticist in the period of Noor-Eesti, writing some impressionistic stories about students, taking Estonian literature thus into the city.

The escape from reality into the world of phantasy, mysticism, and art for art's sake was challenged at the outbreak of the Russian revolution in 1917 by the Siuru group of young writers, and also by the Neo-Realists who had begun

• [776] their work after World War I. Siuru, in Estonian folklore, was the daughter of the God Taara, a bluebird, the symbol of restlessness and search for happiness. To the Siuru group

796 in the grove. At the beginning of this century, however, they took there only bread and butter on a plate and candles for worshiping God. At the grove they set up tables and ate there. After eating they sat on the bench in a line and drank beer which was made by a farmer especially for all of them to drink. In a couple of hours, the people from other villages would join them in drinking. Alava, who has described this festival, compares it with the so-called vakkove-festival of the Ingrians.

778 In olden times the Votes also worshipped holy springs. One of them was called "Elijah's Spring." The water of this spring was clear and cool and it was considered to possess great power. At the spring there grew a high oak [796] tree which was also regarded as sacred. On Elijah's Day at midsummer the people used to organize a fair, called "Elijah's Fair," near this spring.

● 776 Elijah, who plays such an important role in Votes' ancient religion, seems to be their national saint. There are some other traces of the Elijah's cult preserved among the Votes. In Pummala, for instance, the bones of the ram, who was slaughtered for Elijah's Day, were taken to two crosses which were just beyond the village and were called "Elijah's Cross."

771 The above remarks refer to former times. What about the situation among the Votes nowadays? Prof. Ränk, who in 1942-43 studied the Votes, found the Greek Orthodoxy and the ancient paganism still existing side by side. It should be mentioned that at this time the Votes were occupied by the Germans who did not impede their religious practices, but rather encourag-
778 ed them. Therefore the icons, which were re-

Annex "A," Subparagraph 1k,

Sociological Background

RELIGION

795 781 771 The Vepsians are officially Greek Catholic. The influence of the Church has been, however, very superficial, limited mainly to the observance of formalities, such as the sign of the cross, bowing down to the floor, and so on. Under such conditions the old, heathen beliefs have had an excellent chance to survive among the Vepsians up to the present day. Sometimes certain features of the Christian religion have been mixed with superstitions. Thus a Vepsian family, for instance, was afraid of breaking the fasts for fear that this might cause the sickness of a cow or another animal.

• 776 The Vepsian heathen religion is based on a belief in spirits. The dwelling house and all other buildings have their protective spirits, called "masters" and "mistresses." Such are pert-izhand 'master of the hut,' lavan izhand ' master of the cow-shed' lavan emag 'mistress of the cow-shed,' külbetin izhand 'master of the bathhouse,' gomnan izhand 'master of the kiln,' and gomnan emag 'mistress of the kiln,' etc.; the two last-mentioned are called also rigibukoo and rigibab, respectively. Entering the bathhouse, the people bow toward each corner and ask a

776 blessing from the spirits. When a family changes its abode, these unseen masters and mistresses are asked to come along.

One of the most popular spirits of the Vepsians is metshiine, the forest spirit. He is as high as the forest wherein he dwells and is ever-present there. He can also assume a human shape. Metshiine sometimes helps the hunter, predicts future happenings to the people, etc. Communication with him requires the special skill of the magician who alone is able to make him appear. There are also other forest spirits, such as metsan izhand 'master of the forest' and metsan emag 'mistress of the forest,' towards whom the attitude seems to be one of trust, while the terms metsamhed ' forest men' and metsamhen poigad 'sons of the forest men' are even used as abusive words.

In the water lives the vedhiine, or turzhaz, who protects his herd against the nets and seines of fishermen. The hairy water spirit onah moves on misty and rainy days from one lake to another. Kŭhăroo and kaharoo are spirits of corn who bring luck to the crop.

Over the other world reign the man izhand 'earth master' and man emag 'earth mistress.'

Similar beliefs in spirits are to be found among the closest neighbors of the

3: Indiana U. S-4, 5 1955 RG4 Estonia RG4
Vepses

776 Vepsians, the so-called Ludians in eastern Olonets. It is possible that several features of these beliefs have been borrowed by the Vepsians and Ludians from the Russians.

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000 "advanced technics" referred to in this Soviet source.

226 Other means of livelihood. All other occupations besides farming have very little significance in Vepse. In 1897, only 0.89 per cent of these people got their livelihood from fishing and hunting. Fishing has importance only for the North Vepsians. Formerly they fished not only for their own food but also for trade. All the salmon was sold, whereas whitefish and other cheaper kinds of fish they [227] used themselves. Their fishing gear consisted of nets and seines. The seines were owned by two or three persons and the catch was divided between them.

In more recent times the catch is said to be quite small because of the decreasing supply of fish in the waters and the primitive fish- • [776] ing methods. But even when the catch is good, the fishermen do not like to admit it either to their family or to outsiders, for they are afraid that the water spirit may get angry and tangle their nets.

The Middle and South Vepsians fish for their own food on Sundays and at other free times. For each village there are one to two seines belonging to several families. Kettunen, on the occasion of his second trip to the Vepsians in 1934, states that the illegal fishing has ruined the formerly rich abundance of fish in the Vepsian lakes.

771 religion is based on a belief in nature spirits, beliefs about the dead, and a belief in magic. These beliefs form the cornerstones of the
[777] Livonian folk religion. As Loorits has shown, the Livonian folk religion has been exposed to very strong foreign influences (Kur, Latvian, German, etc.), whereas the genuine Proto Balto-Finnic inheritance in it is comparatively small.

• 776 For the Livonians nature appears animated, filled with all kinds of spirits. Almost every natural phenomenon has its mother. Thus there are mothers for snow, wind, earth, flax, forests, berries, the sea, etc. Fathers are, however, rare among the spirits (e.g. the forest father, sea father, etc.). Since the sea plays an especially prominent role in the Livonians' life, sea spirits are most numerous in the folk beliefs. Besides the sea mother and sea father, there are sea people, who live as the people on the earth do. The sea maidens bathe and dance in the waves and tend the blue seacows. There are also horses in the sea whose names are used to scare the children. The children of Pharaoh, the successors of the troops of the Pharaoh who perished in the Red Sea while chasing the Israelites, are supposed to be part human and part fish.

The Livonian spirits are completely anthropomorphic and their life is similar to the life of the people themselves. They have their houses, gardens and animals, their own

● 776 social classes, kings and castle ladies, farm hands and maidens, even priests and an army. The spirits are divided, too, on the model of a family, into fathers, mothers, sons and [777] daughters. The spirits have preserved only a little of their heathen origin, but show a strong Catholic influence. Several of them have been taken over from Latvian, such as the God's sons, the sun's daughters, the mother of happiness, etc.

[777] 775 The Livonians' beliefs concerning the dead are strongly influenced by the Latvians. Widespread is the conception of death as a special being (novõ) which predicts the death of the people by noise. The Livonians believe that the body of the dead stays in the grave until the resurrection, but the soul goes during the knell into heaven or wanders through the world. When the dead is taken to the graveyard, other dead come to meet him riding on the animal which was killed for the burial. They sit sometimes on the coffin, which therefore becomes [764] quite heavy. The dead person accompanies the burial procession back to the house door or even enters the room. For him a towel, an empty plate and a spoon are put on the end of the table which is closest to the door. Some people are believed to be able to see the dead during the burial. The time between Michaelmas and St. Martin's Day is called "souls' time," since the dead are then roaming around. In former times it was customary to feed the dead with porridge, bread, beer and milk every